

## Amendments to the Claims

*The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application*

1.-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) A chemically modified double stranded nucleic acid molecule, wherein:

[[a.]]a) the double stranded nucleic acid comprises a first sense strand and a second an antisense strand;

~~b: the first strand comprises a sense region and the second strand comprises an antisense region;~~

[[c.]]b) each strand is ~~about~~ 18 to ~~about~~ 27 nucleotides in length, ~~about~~ 18 to ~~about~~ 23 nucleotides of each strand are complementary to each other, and at least 18 nucleotides of the ~~second antisense~~ strand are complementary to a target RNA sequence; and

[[d.]]c) the first sense strand includes a terminal cap moiety at its 5'- and 3'-ends, and the ~~second antisense~~ strand optionally includes a terminal cap moiety at its 3'-end, wherein said ~~3'-end terminal cap moiety at the 3'-end is a~~ moieties are independently selected from the group consisting of 4',5'-methylene nucleotide[[:]]; 1-(beta-D-erythrofuranosyl)

nucleotide, 1,5-anhydrohexitol nucleotide[[:]]; L-nucleotides, LNA, threo-pentofuranosyl nucleotide[[:]]; acyclic 3',4'-seco nucleotide[[:]]; acyclic 3,4-dihydroxybutyl nucleotide[[:]]; acyclic 3,5-dihydroxypentyl nucleotide, 3'-3'-inverted nucleotide moiety[[:]]; 3'-3'-inverted abasic moiety[[:]]; 3'-2'-inverted nucleotide moiety[[:]]; or 3'-2'-inverted abasic moiety; and said ~~5'-end terminal cap moiety at the 5'-end is selected from the group consisting of~~ a 4',5'-methylene nucleotide[[:]]; 1-(beta-D-erythrofuranosyl) nucleotide[[:]]; 1,5-anhydrohexitol nucleotide[[:]]; L-nucleotide[[:]]; LNA[[:]]; threo-pentofuranosyl nucleotide[[:]]; acyclic 3',4'-seco nucleotide[[:]]; 3,4-dihydroxybutyl nucleotide[[:]]; 3,5-dihydroxypentyl nucleotide, 5'-5'-inverted nucleotide moiety[[:]]; and or 5'-5'-inverted abasic moiety.

19. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said double stranded nucleic acid molecule comprises no ribonucleotides.

20. (Previously presented) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said double stranded nucleic acid molecule comprises one or more ribonucleotides.
21. – 32. (Canceled)
33. (Currently amended) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in the ~~first~~ sense strand are 2'-O-methyl pyrimidine nucleotides.
34. (Currently amended) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more purine nucleotides present in the ~~first~~ sense strand are 2'-deoxy purine nucleotides.
35. (Currently amended) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in the ~~first~~ sense strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.
36. (Currently amended) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in said antisense ~~second~~ strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.
37. (Currently amended) The double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein one or more purine nucleotides present in said ~~second~~ antisense strand are 2'-O-methyl purine nucleotides.
38. (Previously presented) A composition comprising the double stranded nucleic acid molecule of claim 18 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.